

C.D.E.F



The relevance of this edition, DOCTRINE No. 4, is of particular significance today because it is fully dedicated to the legal issues surrounding the commitment of our forces.

Our soldiers are increasingly confronted by complex situations, where war is not war, where there are multiple actors, with various statuses, men, civilians or not, women, and even at time children, youngsters always.

On top of additional laws, compounded by their intermingling, and, at times, their contradictions, this century's conflicts take place in a foggy environment – a new “fog of war”.

This fog thickens as our opponents frequently dismiss the rules and laws that regulate war conventions.

Therefore, we should do everything possible not to let “the voice of law being so loud as to paralyze even a moderate use of our forces”. Within the well defined framework of the six employment principles of our professional Army – freedom and legitimacy of action ; concentration of forces and gradation of the effects of our weapons ; economy of force and damage control (either human, cultural...) – the most rigorous observance of the law is a must for our forces.

Of course, all of the above, in strict compliance with the universal values that are the foundation of our democracies. But, also while ensuring, as an essential concern, the success of our forces, and therefore the consolidation of the peace we always intend to make.

On this line of thought I would like to thank Mrs. BERGEAL and her staff of the Legal Services Directorate, for so willingly participating in the edition of this “Doctrine” which, de facto, is a doctrine document.

Major General Gérard BEZACIER